be drowning in our own surpluses. Market prices will fall further, and Government payments will go up. That is the net essence of this bill. I hate to say that. I wish that were not the case.

I have supported agriculture bills in the past, unlike some of our colleagues in this Chamber. I would like to support an agriculture bill this year. Unfortunately, I see this bill as taking a giant step in the wrong direction, a direction where people will not be farming, due to what the demand or the marketplace is dictating, but, frankly, a marketplace dictated by Government, Government subsidies, Government largesse, and, ultimately, Government control. This Senator believes that is a mistake.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. NICKLES. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. NICKLES. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, how much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Four and one-half minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. On this side. How much time on the other side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no time remaining.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I think all has been said that needs to be said, at least for today, on this farm bill. I guess we are going to have 6 more hours of saying it all over again tomorrow. So I see no need to stay here any longer.

I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time is yielded back.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period not to exceed 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE EDUCATION BUDGET

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Iowa for yielding the time. This is extremely important legislation. As one who from time to time manages floor legislation, I recognize that it is important to keep the focus and attention on the pending subject matter.

But I want to take a moment of the Senate's time to talk about another issue which is important to the families in this country; that is, our education budget.

I take this moment now because we have had a series of actions by the administration in recent days that brought new focus and attention on the issue of education funding.

Money, in and of itself, is not going to answer the problems we are facing in this country on any public policy issues, and it will not in the area of education. But what we had last year was an education reform program that was worked on by Republicans and Democrats alike, the No Child Left Behind Act. Prior to passage of the new law, there was criticism of the federal education programs, that they were not resulting in the children developing academic skills and succeeding in our school systems across this country, and there was also a very fundamental understanding; and that is, while money alone will not solve the problem, reform alone will not solve the problem. If you bring reform together with resources, you are going to fulfill a recipe for progress for children in this country.

The reforms, which we spelled out in the new law, are raise standards for students and teachers and hold schools and school districts accountable for results. It requires a great deal from the students, a great deal from the schools, a great deal from the parents, a great deal from the local communities, additional responsibilities by the States. We in Washington told them that we were going to be a partner in this endeavor to try to really make a difference in enhancing academic achievement.

That was an endeavor on which many of us signed off. Many of us, who have been here for a period of time, have raised some serious questions about the seriousness with which our Republican friends are really committed to the areas of education and education reform. I remember, after we saw Republican leadership take over in the Senate, as a result of the elections of 1994, one of the first actions they undertook was a rescission of some $1.7 billion in education funding that had already been appropriated for some of the neediest children in this country. We fought that. We fought it and fought it, but they had some success in rescinding funding. It was the same year the Republican leadership announced they wanted to abolish the Department of Education.

I think most of us in this body wanted the Department of Education, for one simple and fundamental reason; that is, every time the President brings a Cabinet together, we want to have someone at that table who is the clear, powerful voice for children and enhanced education and investing in the children of this country and their education. That is what the a Secretary of Education should do. But they wanted to abolish the Department of Education. They said we could have many other Departments, and money in other areas of public policy. But we resisted, and we saw that the Department was not abolished.

Then, if you can believe, in 1995, in the Republican budget resolution that came over from the House, they tried to effectively eliminate over $18 billion in student loans support over a 7-year period. We were able to resist that, just as we resisted Republican efforts in 1981, when President Reagan initiated what they call an origination fee on student loans, an additional kind of payout. We were able to reduce that in a significant way. But students still pay too much up front to borrow money to go to college.

This is the record over a very considerable period of time. Three years ago, we had the battle on the floor of the Senate on elementary education, and there was a move to eliminate and support for 800,000 homeless children, 800,000 migrant children, 800,000 immigrant children who were going to be American citizens. The Republican leadership did not want any coverage for them.

The American people have a certain hesitancy and a certain concern about the legitimacy of the other side's real interest in investing in education. The list of anti-education proposals from the other side continues to go on.

Just ten days ago, we saw the proposal by one of the leading authorities in the administration, Budget Director Mitch Daniels, who suggested a new way to shortchange students pursuing their college education in this country, by effectively denying them the opportunity to go for the lowest-interest rates on student loans that long have been available to them. The Administration sought to require that students pay higher interest rates on their loans, rates which would mean, for the average student, more than $3,000 in additional expenses over the life of their loan. If that loan was $17,000, and repayment were stretched over 30 years, it would be an additional $10,000 in costs.

That is a very clear indication of how the Administration views support for higher education for students in this country.

Now, we find that the President is out traveling across the country talking about the importance of funding education, understanding that we need reform and that we also need resources.

Just yesterday, this is what the President said in Michigan:

The Federal Government has responsibilities. Generally, that responsibility is to

write a healthy check, and we did so in 2002—$22 billion for secondary and elementary education. It's a 25 percent increase. We've increased money by 35 percent for teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and teacher pay.

I wish that had been their proposal, but it was not. It was not. Their proposal was for a 3.5 percent increase, basically enough only to cover inflation despite the tremendous needs beyond inflation that our schools have. All of the difference between the 3.5 percent and what the President identified here was the result of Democratic leadership in the Senate and the Appropriations Committee to get that increase.

Let's be fair. Let's be honest. Let's be candid in terms of it. That is the basic and bottom line. And all we have to do is say: Well, if this really was their proposal last year, what happened to it this year? This year, the administration proposes a 2.8 percent increase, again inflation only. Why on the one hand would you go out and tell people in Michigan that you provided $22 billion for elementary and secondary education, a 25 percent increase, and a 35 percent increase for teachers, recruitment for teachers for one year, and now come on back and propose a 2.8 percent increase.

Who is fooling whom? It was 3.5 percent last year, and the Democrats raised it to the figures the President talked about, and this year it is 2.8 percent. That is what is in the budget. That is what is in the budget numbers.

It gets worse. Look at what the administration's budget is for the future, according to the last budget conference report. It provides virtually zero new money for education for the next 8 years, all the way to 2011. They put forward funding to cover the cost of inflation, but not a nickel above it. There it is, as shown on the chart, for the next 8 years. For the next 8 years: a zero increase. We do not hear them talking about that. We do not hear the President or the Department of Education or anyone for the President denying this. It is because that happens to be it.

What we are saying is that we believe—believe deeply—that when you have an over $2 trillion budget and you say education is your most important priority, outside of national security and the war on terrorism, we think you can do better on education than this. That is what the Democrats say. And that is what we want the American people want. An over $2 trillion budget, and they can't do anything better than a 2.8 percent increase. It doesn't even meet the challenges of inflation and growing school enrollment, never mind all our unmet school needs.

So the schoolteachers who are out there now trying to upgrade their skills, as we have effectively required in last year's reform legislation, so that we can have a well-qualified teacher in every classroom, they are going to be denied the support. 18,000 fewer teachers who received training last year budget will go untrained next year under the administration's budget.

Those children, whom we are asking to meet higher standards, who need that extra help and assistance in the after-school programs with tutorials, they are going to find the doors are going to be closed to them in the after-school programs. 33,000 children who received after-school learning opportunities will be pushed out of programs next school year under the administration's budget.

Why is it that at a time when the country has come together, and there has been a great hullabaloo about the signing of the No Child Left Behind Act—and I participated in it, and welcomed the opportunity, as others did in this body, to see that we were going to give national focus and attention on the issues of education—we are pulling the rug out from underneath this effort? Are we expecting that schools reform will be a success on a tin cup budget? It simply cannot be done. Every schoolteacher, every parent understands that. Every school board member, every principal, every superintendent understands it.

If we are going to leave no child behind, we cannot accept the Administration's budget that provides services to just over a third of all the needy children eligible for Title I assistance. They leave almost 6 million children behind. The Administration wanted to title our bipartisan school reform bill the No Child Left Behind Act. The legislation laid out a glide path of funding so that we would provide supplemental services for every needy child. That is what that legislation stated. That is what the President signed. But you don't get there with this budget.

What we are basically talking about here is whether we are going to get the qualified teachers in underserved areas, areas with the highest incidence of dropout rates among Hispanic Americans and the highest number of unqualified teachers. That does not mean those teachers who are working today under extremely challenging and difficult conditions don't want to be a part of this whole effort to upgrade skills. They want to be. Give them a chance. Give them a fighting chance.

That is what last year's bill sought to do. It sought to give them a chance for certification. Give them a chance for training. Give them a chance for upgrading their skills. We have seen where it has been done. It has been done down in North Carolina. It is being done in a handful of other States. We believe the Nation ought to be about it. That is the policy that last year's bipartisan legislation committed us. That is what we are not living up to.

I hope we can try to get back to what we committed ourselves to and what we are fighting for here today. We have the opportunity at this time to try to breathe new life into the pledge to leave no child behind. We still have the appropriations process to go through. We welcome a President who says: All right. We have looked through these figures. We know we are fighting a war on terrorism. We know we are funding homeland security. But by God, at the greatest times of American history, we have not only fought overseas but we have invested here at home. The place to start off that investment is going to be here in the area of education. We are going to support those past efforts, those bipartisan efforts and make sure that the legislation comes to life with an infusion of added and desperately needed resources.

We are going to continue to make our presentation, continue to make this case day in and day out. We want to tell the parents in this country that when we were a part of voting for that legislation to enhance academic achievement and accomplishment, we said it was a national priority and we meant it.

This administration's budget does not make education a national priority. So, we are going to fight for those families. We are going to fight here on the floor. We are going to fight during the appropriations process. We will take on the administration. But we are not going to leave the children of this country behind.

ENRON MARKET MANIPULATION

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, this morning I sent a letter to the Attorney General asking him to institute a criminal investigation against Enron and other energy companies. I will read that letter into the RECORD.

The letter says:

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHCROFT: I am writing to ask that you institute a criminal investigation to determine whether federal fraud statutes or any other laws were violated by Enron and other energy companies engaged in energy trading and delivery of natural gas and electricity to the Western Energy Market in 2000 and 2001.

In January, during a hearing before the Energy Commission I asked Patrick Wood, Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), to investigate whether Enron manipulated prices in the Western Energy Market. The enclosed documents released by FERC indicate that Enron was not only manipulating prices in the West, but also engaged in a number of calculated strategies such as ''Death Star,'' ''Fat Boy,'' and ''Get Shorty'' to either receive payment for energy not delivered or increase price. In my book, this is outright fraud.

Since Arthur Andersen (the entire company) has been indicted by the Justice Department for shredding documents, it seems to me that Enron is at least as culpable, if not more so, for creating certain schemes to perpetuate acts of fraud on consumers under the guise of corporate strategies.

Because UBS Warbug has purchased Enron's trading entity, I am particularly concerned that the same manipulative trading strategies may continue to be in place today. I ask that you launch a thorough investigation into this matter which may well involve other energy companies that delivered energy into the Western Energy Market in 2000 and 2001 and continue to do so today.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.